

**Matching Grant Division
Questions and Answers from the
FY 2002 RFA**

1. We seek to match USAID grant with revenue from a variety of sources, including fees for service paid by the communities, restricted private sector/corp. contributions, and unrestricted support. How would we need to document these kinds of revenue as matching funds for the AID grant?

Answer: The only way PVC/MGD can monitor its resources is through the accounting data provided by the recipient PVO. And, although the partner organization's contribution is not recorded on USAID books, the primary PVO (recipient PVO) must maintain an accounting of monies received from its partners (i.e., communities, private sector/corp.), thus the amounts, by project, are recorded by the primary PVO (recipient PVO) on their books, but not on USAID books. In the event of a USAID audit, the availability of this information is required.

2. As per the RFA, I am checking to find out if this match grant will include working in Afghanistan and Pakistan?

Answer: Only countries included on the eligible country list are supported under the RFA. While there is no mission in Pakistan, that country is included on the list, so it is a country eligible for support. However, you need to contact the Desk Officer, 202-712-1861, to discuss USAID activities in Pakistan.

3. As a worldwide effort would VITA-Connect qualify or would VITA need to have specific in-country activities that it would be applying for?

Answer: Although VITA-Connect is a worldwide effort, you should identify a particular region wherein you will concentrate MG monies, identifying specific countries, with specific in-country activities in that region where you plan to implement the program.

4. If specific country activities are needed then do larger organizations such as UNESCO qualify as partners?

Answer: MG considers local organizations and governments to be the implementing partners. Donor organizations such as UNESCO can co-fund an activity and/or program with you but they will not be considered as recipients for USAID funds.

5. One of the eligibility requirements cited is that the organization receives at least 20% of its total annual financial support for its international programs from non-US government sources. Is this calculated in the same way that privateness percentage is calculated for PVOs? If not, can you elaborate on how the 20% is determined?

Answer: The requirement is the 20% privateness percentage, thus, they are one and the same with no need for a difference in calculation.

6. In Section II, paragraph B.1 of the RFA, the eligibility requirement states that an organization must receive at least 20% of its total annual financial support for its international programs from non-U.S. government sources. Does this eligibility requirement apply to all partner organizations, or just the lead partner?

Answer: The eligibility requirement applies only to the lead partner, the primary PVO requesting the support.

7. Have any of the planned interactive Q&A discussions or conference calls been scheduled?

Answer: In an effort to maintain the transparency of the MG process, there will be no conference calls. However, Q&A discussions will be posted on the web o/a October 31, 2001.

8. Is there a maximum number of countries (and partner organizations) that can be included in the application?

Answer: MG asks that the PVO implement its program in at least two (2) but no more than six (6) countries.

9. Could you please clarify the differentiation between “technical interventions” and “other program interventions”?

Answer: A technical intervention is the primary sector specific intervention, i.e., microenterprise, health, conservation, etc. which defines the principal objectives of your proposal. Other program interventions are those interventions, innovations or strategies that will enhance your ability to achieve the program objectives. For example, a proposal may have as its primary objective the provision of microfinance services to an under served population. However, that proposal may incorporate a policy advocacy component to improve the regulatory environment affecting microfinance institutions. In this case, the provision of microfinance services is the primary technical intervention while influencing local regulations is the "other program intervention" intended to enhance the PVOs ability to achieve the primary program objectives. See also explanation p. 15 (c.1, c.2) of RFA.

10. Would it be possible to receive contact information for the recipient organizations that were slated to present at the FY 2002 conference?

Answer: Unfortunately no, without a full fledged workshop, it is unfair to have all the PVOs calling the individual presenters to discuss the MG program outside of the RFA Workshop setting.

11. Have geographic priorities or eligible countries changed in the wake of September 11?

Answer: The eligible country list remains unchanged at this time.

12. Regarding the match/cost share: Can only current, in-hand funds count toward this, or can we also include potential and pending funds anticipated during the duration of the grant period?

Answer: Potential and pending funds anticipated may also be used as a part of the match/cost share during the duration of the grant-period.

13. What is the cut-off date for program evaluations which applicants are required to include and cite in the applications?

Answer: As noted in the RFA, p. 7, II. (B.2) Eligibility Requirements and Program Priorities, “have completed an external programmatic evaluation (not to be confused with a financial audit) of its activities within the last three years prior to application submission.”

14. “Strengthen Information Technology, p. 5” - Would PVC support, under this objective, the PVO’s development of an information system that allows the PVO to more effectively deliver its services, or only activities directly related to Information Technology?

Answer: Yes. See also p. 5 for more detail as indicated above.

15. Given our regional focus and level of uncertainty for the third and possibly fourth country, is it possible to apply to the new West Africa regional office in Mali?

Answer: You are applying under the RFA to BHR/PVC/MGD not the USAID Missions. What you are doing with the Missions when you share your RFA (as requested p. 12) with them is making sure that the Mission is aware of the proposed program you wish to implement in country, and to see if it is compatible with the Missions' strategic objectives. The Mission will also indicate whether the proposed program is either feasible or not feasible. If it is not, the Mission will so advise us and will concur or not concur on the proposed program. However, outside of the Matching Grant RFA you can also apply directly to any of the USAID Missions for whatever program(s) you may wish to implement in that particular country.

16. Is it possible to add a country at a later date based on circumstances?

Answer: It is possible to add a country at a later date during the project implementation stage. However, this must be indicated in the RFA when submitted, and the anticipated costs should be reflected in your overall budget. Once an agreement is negotiated and approved, additional funds are generally not forthcoming when the country is identified, and the agreement will be modified to include the selected country. A budget (SF 424) and a program description for the new country activities will have to be completed and submitted to the MG Project Officer.

17. Regarding the 50% US dollar cash match – Would in-kind donations of medicines, medical equipment or supplies count towards the match?

Answer: No. Cash is the requirement for the 50% match for the Matching Grant Program. The dollar-for-dollar match reflects an equal partnership between PVOs and PVC.

18. Do you make public successful applications or awarded contracts to NGOs for reference:

Answer: Yes, through our BHR/PVC Portfolio that is published on an annual basis.

19. What is an external programmatic evaluation?

Answer: An external programmatic evaluation is an overall programmatic evaluation of the program activities implemented in prior years by the PVO. It does not necessarily have to be an evaluation for the particular application you are proposing to submit under the RFA, but it would be helpful if you have had an evaluation done of a project for similar activities as proposed. An objective analysis of your program activities within the last three years is what we are looking for. Please visit the CDIE homepage for more detailed information on USAID evaluation requirements – http://www.dec.org/usaids_eval/. If your organization is interested in conducting an evaluation, you may contract individually with an expert or with an organization/company that regularly conduct evaluations.

20. Is an A-133 audit considered a programmatic audit as it covers both management and financial issues?

Answer: No. It is a financial audit and does not replace the external programmatic evaluation required.

21. Is it possible for a matching grant, in the eligibility-growth category, to be given to a PVO that has never received a matching grant before, provided they have a mentor who is willing to provide technical assistance in administering the grant? Or, must the grant be given to the previous matching grant awardees (i.e. the mentor) to be passed through to the nascent PVO?

Answer: No. In the Summary of Award Categories, p. 10 of the RFA, "the PVO in order to be eligible for the Growth and Innovation Category must have a sector track record and experience with the Matching Grant Program." In a mentoring relationship, the larger organization is the prime contractor with the small and nascent PVO the organization to be mentored. A mentoring relationship is not required, but it is recommended, where practical, for nascent PVOs. However, any registered PVO that meets the eligibility requirements may apply for a Matching Grant. Any applicant that has never received a prior matching

grant as the prime contractor will only be considered under the Entry Category. An organization that has a current matching grant that does not end this fiscal year is ineligible for a second concurrent grant.

22. Mentoring is not mentioned in the entry category at all. Is it a bonus to include a mentor in this category?

Answer: No. See criteria in Summary of Award Categories, p. 10 of RFA. Please note that the rationale behind the mentoring relationship is to develop a partnership between a PVO that has experience with the Matching Grant program and a nascent PVO that doesn't have that experience. This is intended to help strengthen the capacity of the nascent PVO and help them become more competitive in the grant process. By definition, all PVOs applying under the Entry Category are inexperienced with the Matching Grant program although they may nonetheless have considerable experience, just not with this particular grant program.

23. Are there examples of previously successful environmental grants I can read?

Answer: You may want to check the CDIE web site to see if there are environment programs or projects that have been funded by the Agency to get a sense of the types of activities that are supported. For BHR/PVC we provide the "BHR PVC Portfolio" which gives a brief description of all awards funded.

24. Is it permissible to target for capacity building an NGO registered in a developing country that was established by and is affiliated with the PVO applying for the matching grant and that bears the same names as the PVO applying for the matching grant?

Answer: Yes.

25. Are Area/Regional Offices considered headquarters for the purpose of the 50% rule? Assuming the Area/Regional Offices are not part of headquarters, where do we include their expenses in the budget?

Answer: The Area/Regional Offices should not be included as headquarters costs, as those are cost being incurred overseas. The budget is broken down as follows: Headquarters, Area Offices and Country programs, Total. You'll need to provide a detailed budget for each of these categories.

26. We would like to initiate activities in Sierra Leone, we note that Sierra Leone is a Priority 2 country. Thus, which USAID mission should we contact as we develop our proposed work and have it reinforce priorities for Sierra Leone?

Answer: You should contact USAID/Guinea-Bissau (Conakry), See address at Appendix C, page 32.

27. Are support letters required? If so, how much weight is given to these?

Answer: No. Including such letters is at the discretion of the applicant. As before, there is no specific weight assigned to support letters.

28. Are preliminary meetings and documentation of the visits with USAID Missions required for the proposal?

Answer: Yes, see p. 13, C. Technical Application Format, No. 9.

29. How may I obtain the strategic objectives for the Missions in Ecuador, Tanzania, Philippines, the countries included in our proposal?

Answer: From the USAID Homepage, go to www.usaid.gov and click on the different country programs you are planning to include in the RFA, follow directions and search for Strategic Objectives (SOs).

30. Do you know approximately how many applications you are likely to receive in the Entry category?

Answer: No, we will not know this until December 11th when applications are due.

31. Can the loan capital already invested in our ongoing local micro-credit projects be used as part of matching funds for the proposed project?

Answer: No, loan capital funds already committed cannot be used against a potential program if you are successful in competing. However, the Office does not encourage the use of loan capital funds as a part of the PVC match. It is allowable, however, for the PVO to fund loan capital from their match not using PVC funds.

32. What qualifies as an “evaluation?”

Answer: An evaluation is a tool that assesses an organization’s managerial, organizational, financial, human resources, and service delivery capacity to determine the impact and/or worth of services/activities provided by the organization. A specific MG evaluation would determine the impact MG funds has on the organization’s aforementioned categories.

33. We have previously received grants from ECA, PRM and the Bosnia Office of USAID for programs in Bosnia and Nigeria (mostly micro credit for women); would we apply as entry or growth and innovation category? Our annual budget is currently about \$1.5M.

Answer: Based on the description of the categories, p. 10, and the continued needs of your or the partner organizations, as well as what is needed to sustain the programs as a result of the findings from the prior Grants, your budget, and the probability for securing match funds for the proposed program, you would develop a program according to the criteria. As noted in the Eligibility Requirements Section (II. Part B), p. 7, 20% of your total annual financial support must come from non-U.S. government sources.

34. Is the 50% match included in the total budget, or can this match be used in other areas and programs (i.e., the program budget for this grant equal to both)?

Answer: Yes. The dollar-for-dollar match reflects an equal partnership between the PVOs and PVC. And yes the program budget is equal to both with the funds being used for the specific activities presented and approved from the application.

34. We are a multi sector NGO (1) will you accept sector evaluations, i.e., micro credit as opposed to a comprehensive program evaluation? (2) Does the evaluation have to be in the sector in which we are applying?

Answer: (1) Yes. (2) However, the programmatic evaluation required in the RFA does not have to be in the sector you are applying for.

